

REMARKS

In the Non-Final Office Action of January 11, 2005, claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 4-5 are canceled. Claims 21-24 are newly added. Claims 1, 15, 19, and 23 are independent claims from which all the other remaining claims depend therefrom. Applicants recognize the allowability of claims 19 and 20.

Drawings

Replacement sheets 1-3 have been submitted in response to the Examiner's objections to drawings originally submitted. Figures 1-2 have been replaced. Figures 2A and 7 have been added.

Figures 1 and 2 have been replaced with more detailed figures illustrating the compartment door in the open position and moving into the closed position. Figure 2A has been added. Figures 2 and 2A provide more detail regarding the arrangement between the push-push latch and the compartment door. Figure 7 has been added to illustrate the push-push latch of the present invention within an automobile.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,845,954 to Depue.

The present invention discloses a push-push latch used in association with a storage compartment and its door that will lock the door in a closed position when the door is subjected to a force greater than a predetermined value. On the other hand, the push-push latch as defined in the Abstract of Depue discloses a push-push latch that allows a glove box door "to be moved from a fully closed position to a partially open position and from the partially open position to either a fully open position or the fully closed position." Nowhere does the Depue patent disclose or even suggest locking the glove box door in a closed position. Rather, the features of the Depue patent and the present invention differ

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completely. The present invention prevents the contents of the compartment from exiting from the compartment, while Depue's allows access to the contents of the glove box from multiple open positions of the door.

More specifically, the present invention as disclosed in amended claim 1, includes a heart shaped track having a V-shaped notch and an opening connecting the V-shaped notch to a retaining section. When the guide member is resting in the V-shaped notch, the compartment door is in the closed position. If the compartment door is subjected to a force that is greater than a predetermined value, the guide member is forced through the opening and into the retaining section, thus locking the door in a closed position. The Depue patent does not have an equivalent retaining section, as defined in the present disclosure. It is noted that the Examiner has not clearly stated what element from Depue is equivalent to the retaining section 28 of the present invention.

Claim 1 of the present invention has been amended to further define the opening. As Claim 1 now reads, the "opening has a width dimension that is less than the width dimension of the guide member." The width dimension of the opening is also less than the width dimension of all the other pathways defining the heat shaped track. Further, the track member is made from a plastic and therefore the retaining section and the opening are integrally molded into the track member component. The dimension of the opening coupled with the use of plastic as the material used to make the track member insures that only when the door of the compartment is subjected to a force greater than a predetermined value will the guide member be forced into the opening, thus forcing the walls of the opening to flex out as the guide member passes through into the retaining section. Once the guide member is positioned within the retaining section, the walls of the opening flex back to their original width dimension, within a certain tolerance to lock the guide member within the retaining section, thus, locking the compartment door in a closed position. Depue on the other hand, does not teach or even suggest that any pathways that are defined by the sidewalls and the

raised land have differing width dimensions to impact the guide pin path of travel.

The present invention has been further amended by the addition of new, independent claim 24 to further define the invention and distinguish from Depue. The push-push latch of the present invention travels a routine path during normal operation of the compartment door allowing the door to move between an opened position and a closed position. However, the push-push latch of the present invention travels a non-routine path when the door of the compartment is subjected to a force greater than a predetermined force, thus locking the door in a closed position.

The routine path of travel includes the generally heart shaped track including the V-shaped notch. The non-routine path of travel includes the opening connecting the V-shaped notch to the retaining section, and the retaining section.

Claim 3

Since claim 3 depends from claim 1, it is also novel, nonobvious, and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 4 and 5

Claims 4 and 5 have been deleted. New claims 21-23 have been added to further define the relationship between the connector on the compartment door and its engagement with the push-push latch.

Claims 6, 7, 8-11

Claims 6-11 are all dependent on amended claim 1. Since claim 1 includes structure, i.e., the opening having a width dimension that is less than the width dimension of the guide member, which is not disclosed in Depue, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 6-11 are also novel, non-obvious and in condition for allowance.

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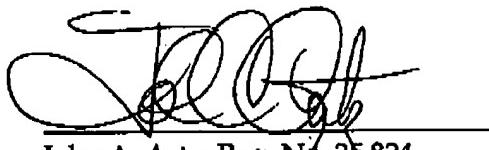
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In light of the amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all the objections and rejections are now overcome. The Applicants have added no new matter to the application by these amendments. The application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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